

FEATURE – BETTY WHITE BECOMES HONORARY FOREST RANGER

INTRO: Actress Betty White is enjoying her new status as an honorary ranger with the USDA Forest Service. USDA's Patrick O'Leary has the story from a recent Washington, D.C. ceremony. (1:27)

AT THE KENNEDY CENTER IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL, COMEDIENNE BETTY WHITE IS THE GUEST OF HONOR, AS THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FOREST SERVICE ACCEPTS HER AS ONE OF THEIR OWN.

Tom Tidwell, Chief, USDA Forest Service: Betty White, on behalf of the Forest Service, I ask you to join us in the cause of conservation by becoming an honorary Forest Ranger. Your passion for animals, for nature, for wildlife - perfectly suit you to our profession.

HER NEW JOB IS THE PROFESSION SHE DREAMED OF JOINING AS A CHILD, AT A TIME WHEN CAREERS IN THE FOREST SERVICE WERE NOT AS OPEN TO WOMEN.

Betty White: Whether or not I've been a legitimate forest ranger or not, I've been working for the cause for the last 89 years. And I will continue to work for it as much as I can. I know this is an honorary position, but it's also one where I can use a voice to try to protect the remaining beautiful parts of this gorgeous world we live on.

BETTY WHITE TOLD REPORTERS SHE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT CONSERVATION OF AMERICA'S OUTDOORS, AND USED HER NEW TITLE TO RECRUIT OTHERS TO SHARE THAT MESSAGE.

Betty White: Try to spread the word to each other, one to one to one, how important it is to save that. Once you pave it over it never comes back, guys.

IN WASHINGTON, D.C., FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M PAT O'LEARY.